

CHAPTER 16

BOULDER, WHERE ELSE WOULD YOU WANT TO BE?

As reported earlier, Boulder was my druthers for college, but lack of finances stopped me. It Just So Happened that finances were also involved in my finally getting to Boulder.

Windsor concluded that it could not meet my required price. But Boulder could: Associate Minister at First Methodist Church and Director (Chaplain) of Wesley Foundation at the University of Colorado. Of course, first we had to get the job. This meant, among other things, an interview with the Wesley Foundation Board, of which Dr. James Buchanan was chair. The interview took place at a luncheon meeting at the famous Boulderado Hotel. Mike and I arrived, met people, lunched with them while carrying on congenial conversations. Then eventually a more serious conversation began between the Board and that young Elder with the beautiful wife. I will never know whether it was my brilliant answers or my beautiful wife's presence that finally won the day.

Or perhaps it was a little of both, and one answer in particular that came at the end of the interview. Jim Buchanan asked me: "If you were to come as Wesley Foundation director, what would you have in mind to do? What changes would you propose?"

I answered, "Right now I have not a single idea about what I would do as the Wesley Foundation director, or what changes I might propose. But ask me the same question six months from now and we will probably have much to talk about."

He smiled and I knew that we had the job. After all, you do not get to be Superintendent of the Boulder High School and have no notion of what administration is all about, and James Buchanan was superintendent of that excellent school.

Jim Buchanan was involved in our going to Boulder, and as I shall report later, he was also involved in our leaving Boulder. During Boulder and forever after, Jim and his wife Helen became friends and dominant influences in our lives.

ON BOAT BUILDING AND KID NAMING. The other major friends that Boulder produced were Richard and Alice Fox. My memory refuses to assure me, but they, like the Buchanans, may have been involved in that initial interview. Involved in that interview or not, they soon were involved in our lives. Alice was a sharp, in charge, New

Yorker, who sounded exactly like one--Bronx vintage. Richard was a professor at the University--a psychologist in charge of the University program of testing and evaluation. He also was a New Yorker, but did not sound quite as distinctly so as did Alice.

I think the Foxes moved in on us just to make sure that we were properly befriended and, where necessary, properly educated. Befriended we were.

Educated? Well, for sure Richard did educate me in boats and boat building. He built a boat right out there in his side yard, and made me his delighted, unskilled assistant. Finished it was both not much of a boat, and a great boat: fifteen-sixteen feet long, no leaks, a five horse power outboard motor. Having assisted in the boat building, I also assisted in the boat enjoyment, especially on a little lake just north of Boulder.

Alice tried her hand at educating us on how not to name children. I proposed naming all boys we might have William; e.g., William Michael, William James, etcetera. So named all you would have to do when you wanted them all at once would be to call, "William!" Alice said not to be funny. Each boy deserved his own individual, distinctive name. So be it. As will be reported later, Alice also got involved in girl-naming.¹

MOON FOLLOWING ME. So we moved to Boulder and into the Wesley Foundation building, a former sorority house, right across the street from the University of Colorado campus. First floor had a living room, fireplace, dining room, kitchen, office, rest rooms, and was where the college kids hung out. Second floor was where the three Tremmels hung out at least part of the time--bedrooms, kitchen, dinning room, living room, bath room, shower. Third floor was where William C. had a big, marvelous, private study--a safe hideaway for continuing doctoral study.

Boulder itself was (and is) a place not far from heaven. Indeed, right at the edge of town you could start the ascent upward past the Flat Irons,² to heavenly elevation number one: Flagstaff Mountain with picnic tables and an overview of everything from Boulder to Denver. Or you could choose a different route out of town to Estes Park, and beyond Estes Park, on scary Trail Ridge Road, all the way up right smack through the clouds.

While still in Windsor, we had fallen in love with Estes Park. Now in Boulder, even closer to Estes Park, that love became something of an obsession. As often as possible we headed for Estes Park. You know, in the evening, drive up there for dinner--several times a week. Mike, family treasurer, began to keep records on household expenses and discovered that "dinner in Estes Park," as often as it was occurring, was damaging the bank account seriously. She concluded that we should put a limit on these Estes excursions. We did. Somewhat.

Estes Park and other excursions were also getting a little "iffy" because Old Faithful Pontiac was getting mighty tired. The time was coming. We had saved money from way back in Denver days when Mike worked at Buckley

¹While we were in Boulder, Alice and Richard adopted two children--sister and brother: Betty and Tom.

²Three great upthrust rock surfaces.

Field.³ We bought a new Ford,⁴ but it was not such a great happiness to do so because it meant that we had to part with Old Faithful--the car of Arapahoe, and Grey Gables, and 1228 Sherman, and Elitch Gardens, and City Park, and Evergreen.

One of the last things I remember about old Pontiac was that we were driving along one moon bright night. Mikie was in the back seat. Suddenly he asked, "Daddy, why is the moon following me?" I answered with a wisdom too profound for me to have understood at the time. I said, "Because the moon likes you, Michael--because the moon likes you."⁵

The town of Boulder? Well, go visit it. It is about as charming as it ever was, even if more people live there now.

CHAPLAIN. The job itself? Director of Wesley Foundation was a fun job, partly because we were young enough to keep up with college kids, who were and are incomprehensible energy systems. Basically we (both Mike and I) were available for talking, and counselling, and friendliness, and concern. The Wesley Foundation building was open from 8:00 a.m to midnight every day. And if you were around after midnight: "Just see that the door is locked when you leave." There were parties and college excursions and quiet study times, but mostly Wesley Foundation was what it called itself: A Home Away From Home.

Each Sunday morning, in one of the classrooms at the church downtown, I delivered a lecture on *Religion. What is it?* for any interested college students, and there were usually between fifty and a hundred students attending. At eleven o'clock I assisted the church pastor in the worship service, and sometimes, when he was out of town, preached the sermon.

PLAYMATES. It was a good time: a rich time in our lives. And the beginning time of James Harold.⁶ Immediately William Michael was delighted. From the time Michael could talk, he had wanted a brother. Now he had one.⁷ As soon

³This was money we had also refused to spend on that Windsor coal bill.

⁴That Ford was a 1948 (maroon colored) that cost \$1600 or \$1800. My research associate is not sure.

⁵This is not for publication, but after we sold old Pontiac, Mike and I drove past the used car lot, and there he was looking so forlorn that we wept a few tears. It was just plain desertion.

⁶James was born at Boulder-Colorado Sanitarium (Adventist Hospital) May 2, 1948.

⁷Footnote of information: William Michael was named William for his father William and Michael for his mother "Mike". James Harold was named for James Worrell and Harold Secor. Hal Secor and William C. have been close friends since high school days. Hal was best man at the important June 22, 1943 wedding.

as brother James was big enough to desert a baby bed, he and Michael became roommates.

Before James was born, Michael, in his desire for a living-with-him-playmate, had invented two playmates. One was named Pokum; the other was Tex. I asked Michael where Pokum and Tex slept. He pointed to the upper bed of the bunk beds in his room and said, "Up there." Of course, once James got old enough, Pokum and Tex had to sleep somewhere else. I never asked where.

FRIENDS NEXT DOOR. Also, with James' arrival Wesley Foundation now had two star attractions. The first star attraction had been William Michael. He was two years old when we got to Boulder and five years old when we left. That proved to be just the right age span for star attraction in a college crowd. Example: East of us was a sorority house (Kappa Alpha Theta). It did not take long for those sorority girls to discover a really cute, safe boyfriend. It got to be such a terrific affair between Mikie and one of those girls that on one occasion she took him all the way to Denver so they could go to the circus together.

On one occasion Mike and I had opportunity to observe that this affection stuff was not exactly without provocation. That kid knew how to turn on the charm. One day, at noon time, coming from somewhere, we stopped for food in a cafe in Littleton, Colorado. It Just So Happened that Michael, three years old, was wearing a T-shirt inscribed with his name, "Mikie". Included with the food was ice cream as dessert. Michael ate his ice cream rather quickly. Then as the waitress came by, he held up his dish and said with a velvet voice, "More, please". That voice and smile were irresistible. That waitress was hooked. She brought the ice cream and said, "Here, Mikie, this is just for you." He thanked her properly. Then after she walked away, he asked, "How did she know my name?"

Another example of special stardom: there was that sorority house on one side of Wesley Foundation; on the other side there was a fraternity--a Jewish fraternity (the name skips me). Those fraternity brothers may have decided that Mikie was one of those Christians who needed saving. Whatever, Mikie became a favorite of Israel, both in and out of their fraternity house. They even invited him to dinner occasionally, and on one occasion, even to one of their High Holy Day celebrations.

Jim, as he *matured*, also fell into this sorority-fraternity stardom. Of special fascination for both Mikie and Jim was the next door fraternity boys' mascot--a St. Bernard named Romeo. For the Tremmel kids, the fraternity house became Romeo's house and the large rock outcropping in Romeo's front yard was Romeo's mountain. And on Romeo's mountain Michael and James often ate a picnic lunch.

WORDS WORDS WORDS. While everybody picnicked and frolicked,

William C. continued graduate study.⁸ The time was approaching. The Tremmels all took a month from Boulder, travelled above Evergreen to the Dodge Ranch, rented a cabin, and away from everybody, I finished my dissertation. That Dodge Ranch experience was also a wonderful time. During the day, Mike fished in a mountain stream, while I boy-sat and typed. Early evening I fished. And all of the time we lived under the magnificence of Mount Evans right up there, sure enough poking into heaven.

Dissertation was approved. Defense of dissertation was accomplished. June 15, 1950 arrived. We were in the Iliff Chapel. The "lessers" were all accounted for: the new masters. Then came the time of the doctorates.⁹ My name was called. Then as I crossed the stage to get that hood, I heard a little voice: "That's my Daddy." And that voice and that claim was as delightful in that moment as was the bright hood I had been chasing for years and was about to be decorated with. That's my Daddy.

A few days later, I saw Michael out on the front walk riding his tricycle. He was stopping people and talking to them. Sometime later one of the fraternity boys next door told me about Michael's conversations. He was telling people, "My daddy is a doctor now, so now we can play." Then he went on to explain that although his daddy was a doctor, "He isn't the kind of doctor that can do you any good."

BUCHANAN AGAIN. So now you are all educated. What are you going to do with it? Fact was that die had already been cast. Jim Buchanan and Helen had left Boulder. He had taken the position of Graduate Dean at Kansas State Teachers College in Emporia, Kansas. In December 1949, Jim and Helen came back to Boulder for a Christmas visit. They had dinner with us and as we sat around talking Jim asked when I expected to get that doctoral degree.

I said, "God willing, in June."

He asked, "What are you going to do then?"

I said, "My ambition is to be a college professor."

He said, "Don't take any job until you hear from me."

We heard from him: "There is a job waiting for you in Emporia, if you want it." We wanted it.

WHERE WAS POOCHY. The time to pack up and move was approaching. But we had one slight problem. Sometime earlier a little dog had stationed itself on the front porch of the Wesley Foundation. Mikie took a great liking to that dog. Called him Poochy and said he liked Poochy "because Poochy had such a nice tail." Poochy became a sort of Wesley Foundation Romeo: a

⁸He, also, finally got his druthers and attended classes at the University of Colorado, also.

⁹My degree was a Doctorate in Theology--Th.D.

Sort of Mikie's dog and everybody else's dog.

Mikie and Poochy liked each other, but they were not bosom companions, and because we already had that Tremmel dog named Parson, I tried to wiggle out from under Poochy. What I did was arrange with a church family to take Poochy if, when we got ready to leave, Michael did not raise any question about leaving Poochy behind. Good. Leaving day came. We were at the very point of packing final things into the car when I heard a small voice calling:

"Poochy, Poochy, where are you? Come on Poochy, we are going to leave."

Guess who went to Emporia, also.

A few details of his trip seem in order. First, of course, I had to stop packing and go get Poochy. Second, it was too crowded in the car, so I had to build a cage for Poochy to ride on top of the car. Finally we got off, but not far off. Someone passed us and pointed to the car roof. I stopped. Poochy was about to escape the cage. Close investigation revealed that apparently he had been stung by a bee or a wasp and he was not about to stay on top any longer. So we all rode inside with an empty cage on top.